

SENATE BILL 104

Chairman Sonju and committee members, for the record my name is Bill Honzel. Professionally, I have been licensed and have practiced as a CPA since 1974 with Galusha Higgins & Galusha, a Montana Professional Corporation. As a shareholder and CEO of Galusha Higgins & Galusha I am here to give our full support to SB 104.

Because of significant changes in our profession over the last 15 years, we believe it is vital that certain non-cpa professionals be given the opportunity for an ownership stake in our firm and those of our competitors that are organized as Professional Corporations in the State of Montana. Recruiting non-cpa professionals in disciplines such as information technology, retirement plan administration, and controllership services is difficult in Montana. Retaining that talent is even more difficult if those individuals are unable to gain an equity stake in their employer firms.

SB 104 simply eliminates the disconnect between the Professional Licensing Statutes for CPA firms and the Montana Professional Corporation Act. The elimination of the disconnect will provide CPA firms organized as PC's in Montana the ability to recruit and retain the expertise which makes us better at the services we provide.

Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of Galusha Higgins & Galusha and those CPA firms that are organized as Montana Professional Corporations.